

# THE SPIRIT

by **WILL FISHER**

LIKE AN AVENGING PHANTOM, **THE SPIRIT**, WHO IS REALLY DENNY COLT, LONG BELIEVED DEAD, WAGES A SILENT WAR ON THE ENEMIES OF SOCIETY. . . ALONE, UNHAMPERED BY ANY REGULATIONS, HE CARRIES THE FIGHT TO THE VERY LAIR OF THE ENEMY.

HIGH OVER THE ATLANTIC A SHINING ARMY BOMBER ROARS THROUGH THE CLOUD BANKS THAT SHIFT LUMBEROUSLY BEFORE A QUIET WESTERLY WIND....



IN THE COCKPIT A PUZZLED PILOT POURS HIS HEART OUT TO HIS GLUM NAVIGATOR....

STRANGEST ASSIGNMENT I EVER GOT... TAKIN' SOME MYSTERIOUS LOOKIN' CIVILIAN FOR AN AIRPLANE RIDE!!

MAYBE HE'S A BRASS HAT LOOKIN' OVER DEFENSES..



I DON'T THINK SO... WEARS A MASK UNDER HIS FLYING TOGS... KEEPS PORIN' OVER HIS CHARTS AND ASKING OUR ALTITUDE...

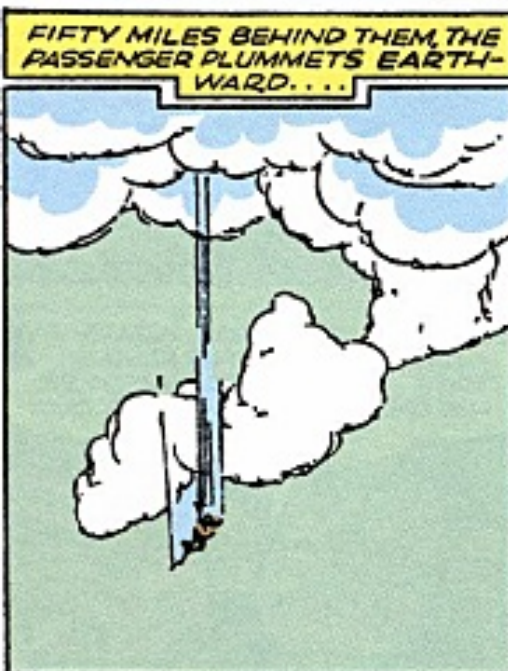


WHAT IS OUR ALTITUDE NOW, PILOT?

5,000, SIR... WIND, 3 MILES PER HOUR...









AT ITS BASE THE BOMBER  
THUNDERS TO A LANDING....

148  
REPORTING!

CHECK!!  
H'YA, SMITH...  
COLONEL  
JASON WAITING  
TO SEE YOU..

CAPTAIN SMITH  
REPORTING, SIR...  
MY PASSENGER  
**DISAPPEARED**  
AT 5,000 FEET,  
SOMEWHERE OFF  
THE COAST OF  
MEXICO.

**FINE!** YOU  
WILL HAVE FOUR  
HOURS SLEEP...  
THEN FUEL YOUR  
SHIP FOR ABOUT  
TWENTY HOURS  
FLIGHT AND  
**RETURN TO  
SEARCH FOR HIM!**

**WHAT?!!** YOU MEAN  
**I'M TO FIND HIM?**  
W-WHY...HE DROPPED  
INTO THE **SEA!!...**  
I.....

CAPTAIN  
SMITH...  
THAT  
WAS AN  
**ORDER!!**

TELL ME, JASON...  
WHY ALL THIS  
**SECRECY...**  
WHAT'S UP?

**PLENTY!!**  
A MONTH AGO,  
ONE OF OUR  
**CRUISERS** ON  
NEUTRALITY PATROL  
PICKED UP A STRANGE  
SHIP, FLOATING OUT OF  
CONTROL OFF THE  
**MEXICAN COAST...**

..THE CREW WAS GONE..AND THE  
SHIP, AN OIL TANKER, WAS EMPTY OF  
ANY **CARGO...** IN ORDER  
TO KEEP IT A **SECRET,**  
I ORDERED THE SHIP  
**SUNK...** WE REPAID  
THE OIL COMPANY...

BUT,  
WHY ALL  
THAT  
**PRECAUTION**  
?

THERE ARE DOZENS  
OF SECRET LITTLE OIL  
STATIONS ALONG THE  
**COAST...** THEY'D  
MAKE EXCELLENT  
**FUELLING POINTS**  
FOR FOREIGN  
**SUBMARINES...**

OH, I SEE..  
THE MEXI-  
CAN  
GOVERNMENT  
REALLY DOESN'T  
**KNOW** ABOUT  
THEM..AND IF  
WE **TOLD** THEM,  
THEY'D START A  
LONG INVESTIGATION  
THAT WOULD REACH  
THE **PAPERS.**

EXACTLY!! AND IF WE SENT GUN-  
BOATS DOWN, WE'D BE CREATING A  
**SITUATION...** THE ONLY THING TO  
DO IS, PLAY **THEIR OWN GAME..**  
**SECRET AGENTS !!**

THAT'S A  
**TOUGH JOB...**  
WHOM DID YOU  
SEND?

**THE SPIRIT!...** YOU MAY HAVE  
HEARD OF HIM...LIKEABLE CHAP...  
NO ONE KNOWS WHO HE **IS...** HE  
OPERATES ENTIRELY ON HIS OWN...  
WHEN PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT  
SIGNED THE DRAFT BILL LAST  
OCTOBER, HE OFFERED HIS SER-  
VICES TO US...THIS IS OUR **FIRST**  
REAL OPPORTUNITY TO **USE** HIM...

..YES.. SOMEWHERE IN THE GULF  
OF MEXICO ON A TINY ISLAND, **THE**  
**SPIRIT** IS WAGING A **ONE MAN**  
DEFENSE OF **AMERICA!**



ON THE ISLAND...THE SPIRIT RE-  
GAINS CONSCIOUSNESS...



I'M AFRAID MY  
RECEPTION WAS A  
BIT TOO WARM  
FOR YOU...  
**SPY!!**

HUH??  
OHH..



NO...I'M A  
DELEGATE SENT BY  
THE AMERICAN PEOPLE  
TO **KICK YOU OUT**  
OF THE WESTERN  
HEMISPHERE!

COOL  
CUSTOMER,  
EH,  
MAX?



IT MAY INTEREST YOU TO KNOW,  
**PIG...** I AM THE FUTURE LEADER  
OF THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE!!  
IN SEVERAL MONTHS, I, NARGOFF  
WILL BE SUPREME GOVERNOR  
GENERAL OF **NORTH AND  
SOUTH AMERICA!**... NOW  
THROW THIS FOOL INTO  
THE LOWER LOCKS!



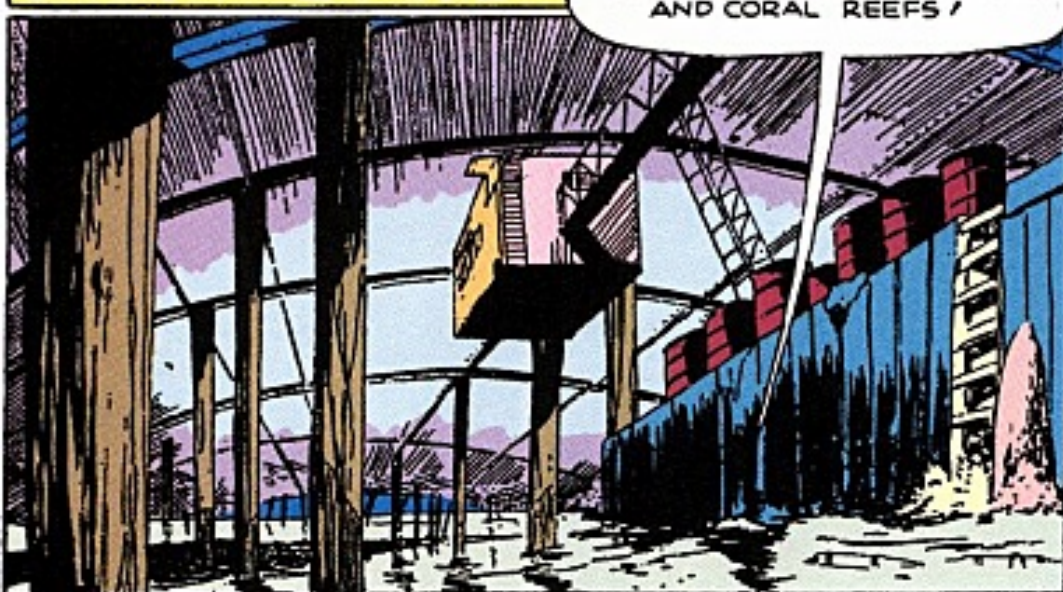
KEEP  
MOVING,  
YOU, OR...



SORRY,  
BUD...  
WE'RE  
PARTING  
COMPANY



A MOMENT LATER HE POPS  
OUT OF THE WATER AND A  
STARTLING SIGHT MEETS HIS EYES..



HOLY SMOKE! THIS ENTIRE  
ISLAND IS A **BLIND**... A PROP,  
BUILT ON SUBMERGED SHOALS  
AND CORAL REEFS!



**OIL DRUMS!** HUNDREDS  
OF THEM...I'LL TAKE  
CARE OF THIS RIGHT  
AWAY! AH...SOME  
DRY WOOD..



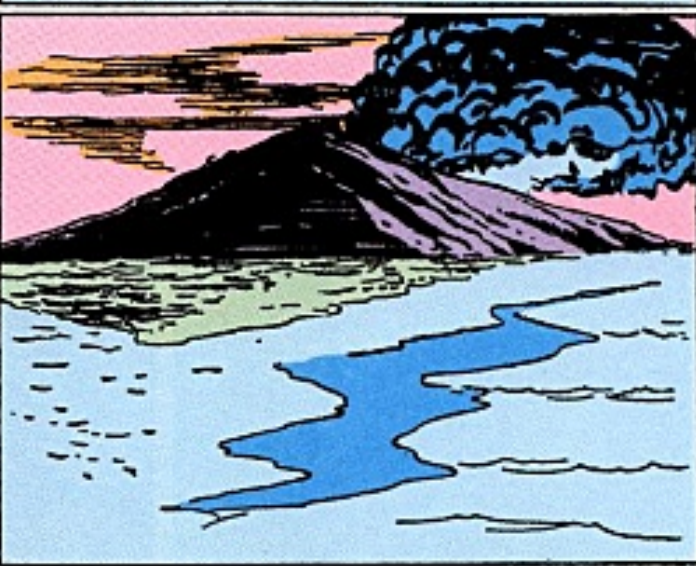
WITH AN IMPROVISED FIRE-BOW, THE SPIRIT BUILDS A BRIGHT BLAZE



USING LONG, POWERFUL STROKES, THE SPIRIT SWIMS OUT OF RANGE....



A SUDDEN RUMBLE... AND THE ENTIRE FAKE ISLAND BURSTS INTO FLAME... GIANT POOLS OF BURNING OIL FLOAT ON THE WATER....



A WALL OF FIRE SURROUNDS THE ISLAND AS FRANTIC MEN SEEK IN VAIN TO LAUNCH SMALL BOATS.



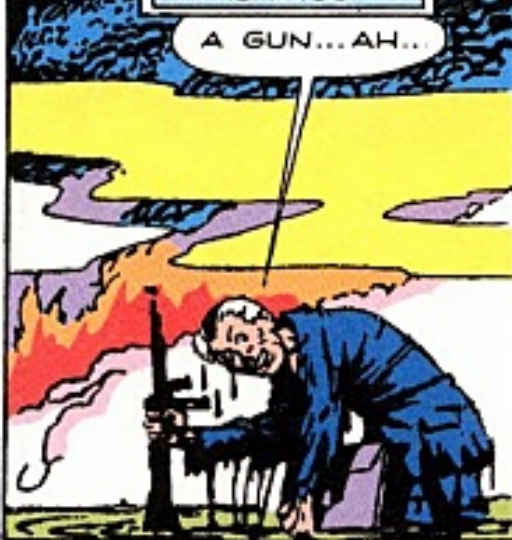
ON ONE SIDE OF THE ISLAND, NOT YET REACHED BY THE FLOATING FLAMES, A MAD MOB TRIES TO BOARD A TINY SAILBOAT... IN THE STRUGGLE THEY KEEP EACH OTHER FROM GETTING ABOARD.....



IN THE CENTER OF THE MILLING MASS, FORGOTTEN BY HIS FRANTIC COMRADES, THE LEADER SCREAMS IN TERROR....



SUDDENLY THE LEADER'S TEACHINGS COME TO HIS MIND..Might is Right.. YES.. HE WAS A FOOL NOT TO FOLLOW HIS OWN TEACHINGS....



FROM BEHIND COMES NARGOFF WITH A SUB-MACHINE GUN, MOWING DOWN HIS MEN...HE SOON REACHES THE BOAT AND CLIMBS ABOARD....

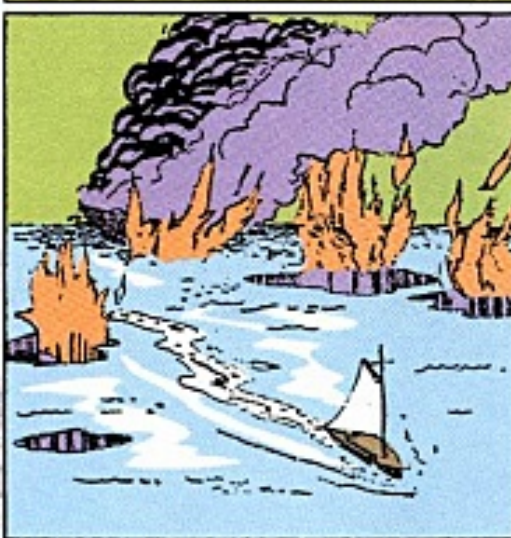


CAST OFF, MAX...CAST OFF!! THE ISLAND IS GOING UNDER!! @!!\$! @!!\$! KEEP OFF, YOU DOGS!





MIRACULOUSLY THE SLOOP CLEARS THE ISLAND JUST AS IT SINKS INTO THE SEA, AMID GREAT HISSING COLUMNS OF STEAM....



WHEW... WE MADE IT!! ALL OF THEM WENT DOWN!

HA...HA...YES.. ONLY YOU AND ME ESCAPED, MAX! YOU SEE, DESTINY PROTECTS ME! MIGHT IS RIGHT.. ONLY THE STRONG SURVIVE!



YOU'LL HAVE TO BE STRONG! THERE'S ONLY ENOUGH WATER FOR A DAY!

YOU!! IT'S A MIRACLE! HOW DID YOU GET HERE?



OH... I WAS WAITING IN THIS BOAT FOR YOU TO GET ABOARD... I KNEW YOU'D GET ON IN SOME WAY... THERE... I'LL TAKE YOUR PAPERS.... THANK YOU!



Y-YOU DIVIDED THE WATER INTO THREE JUGS?

YES.. ONE FOR EACH OF US! I'LL STAY UP HERE FOR THE REST OF THE VOYAGE.. JUST SO I WON'T BE MURDERED IN MY SLEEP!



NIMBLY THE SPIRIT CLIMBS TO THE TOP OF THE MAST.

HMM... NOW, LET'S SEE JUST THE THINGS I WANTED.. PLANS FOR INVASION, FUEL DEPOTS, LISTS OF FIFTH COLUMNISTS AND YOUR BOOK.. THE NEW ORDER... I THINK I'LL READ THROUGH IT.



...HOURS PASS.. THE SALT AIR AND MERCILESS SUN BRING MADDENING THIRST.. MAX GULPS DOWN THE LAST OF HIS SHARE..



GIF ME YOURS!!

NO... NO!! THAT'S NOT FAIR!



IT IS SO!!... ACCORDING TO YOUR OWN BOOK... IT SAYS... When a country wants more land, it has the RIGHT TO TAKE IT FROM A SMALLER ONE....



ON THE HOT DECK THE MEN LOCK IN MORTAL COMBAT.

NO..NO! IT'S MINE.. MINE! YAAAAA

GIMME!





